

West Tisbury School

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Principal

Elaine M. Pace, Ed.D.

Assistant Principal

Joseph Mackey

Gloria Sylva, Adm. Assistant

Susan Merrill, Secretary

Counselors

Judy McCarthy, Ed.D.

Molly Cabral

November 26, 2001

Honorable J. Frederick Motz
United States District Court for the District of Maryland
101 W. Lombard St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

RE: Microsoft I-V CASES, JCCP 4106

To the Honorable J. Frederick Motz,

By way of an introduction, I have been a teacher for over 20 years. I am a recipient of both a National Improvement of Education and a Massachusetts' Technology Pathfinder award, an Apple Distinguished Educator and, since 1988, a presenter of technology and curriculum projects at local, state and national conferences. In addition, I served as a technology mentor to school's involved with Bill Gates' Road Ahead grant project.

I understand that a proposed class action settlement has been filed that would involve the provision of refurbished computers, cash grants and free software from Microsoft to poor children in poor districts.

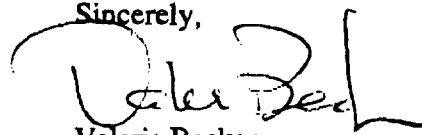
I believe that the settlement being proposed is of quite extraordinary importance. Therefore, the educational community needs to be informed, be represented and be heard. Effectiveness as a concept has enormous appeal ... It suggests that there are standardized practices that apply with equal relevance to every context within which teaching occurs. Effectiveness is irrevocably contextual. What is effective in one context, with one student or group of students, or for one purpose may be severely dysfunctional in another context, with different people, or for another purpose.

Having thrived under democracy, the time has come for Microsoft to act in a way to assure the survival of the free market -- and incidentally, by assuring that virtually the entire populace of the United States will become computer-literate, potential consumers, within a single generation. One way this could be accomplished is by assuring that teachers in American public schools will be provided, by any manufacturer, on demand, and at no cost, with copies of any piece of software or hardware they need.

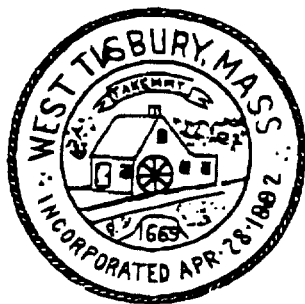
Schools are supposed to be educating, passing the torch of culture to our children. I respectfully caution the courts not to endorse a particular product, but to leave that decision to the schools.

Schools will choose equipment that is durable, can be technically supported, is in line with their curriculum, and supports their learners. At our best we use technology as a tool, not an appendage of children's education...and the schools are in the position of choosing the right tool for this job.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Valerie Becker', with a large, stylized initial 'V'.

Valerie Becker
Director of Integrated Technologies
West Tisbury School
West Tisbury, MA 02575



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FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

To: Hon. J. Frederick Motz Fax Number 410-962-2648
From: Valerie Becken
Date: 11/26

Subject:

RE: Microsoft I-V Cases JCCP 4106

Number of Pages including cover sheet: 3

COMMENTS: _____

If any portion of this transmittal is incomplete, please call....